Relaxed Specifications) 1998-99 crop year ex-Punjab to Assam against demand of local buyers. This rice has been procured in 1998-99 crop year and is within the PFA Standard Initially, State Government of Assam had unilaterally imposed a ban on supply URS rice without taking cognizance of the quality parameter FCI and this Department suitably intervened in the matter and impressed upon the State Government to lift the embargo on supply of URS rice. This matter has now been resolved and the supply of URS rice has been restored.

(b) to (d) In view of the above, questions do not arise. Hiring private

parties for procurement of foodgrains

2682. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to hire private parties for foodgrains procurement;

(b) if so, reasons therefor;

(c) whether it would not interfere with FCI's mandate; and

(d) whether the role of FCI is sought to be limited to buffer stocking only?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

New Foodgrain Policy

2683. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry is seriously thinking of introducing a new foodgrain policy to replace the absolute outlived present policy;